

MR. COFFIN'S
ELECTION SERMON.

MAY 29, 1799.



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1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the asymptotic behavior of the solutions of the system (1) as $t \rightarrow \infty$. It is shown that the solutions of the system (1) tend to zero as $t \rightarrow \infty$ if and only if the matrix A is Hurwitz. This result is proved by the method of the variation of constants.

МОН. НАГ. КОГДА

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1037.

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A
S E R M O N,

PREACHED BEFORE

His Honor MOSES GILL, Esq.

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR,

The Honorable the COUNCIL, SENATE,

AND

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OF THE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

MAY 29, 1799,

BEING THE DAY OF

GENERAL ELECTION.

—•—•—•—•—•—•—
BY REV. PAUL COFFIN, A. M.
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN BUXTON.
—•—•—•—•—•—•—

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MDCCXCIX.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

IN SENATE, May 29, 1799.

ORDERED, That ISAAC THOMPSON, SIMON FRYE, and DANIEL DAVIS, Esq's. be a Committee to wait on the Rev. PAUL COFFIN, and in the name of the Senate, thank him for the Sermon this day delivered by him before His Honor the Lieut. Governor, the Honorable Council, and the two Branches of the General Court, and also to request of him a copy for the Prefs.

Attest, **EDWARD McLANE, Clerk.**

The Address to his Excellency was omitted in the delivery, by reason of his lamented sickness and absence.—A few other sentences also are here inserted, which were not delivered; and *vice versa*.





A

S E R M O N.



II. SAMUEL, xxi. 17.

*THEN THE MEN OF DAVID SWARE UNTO HIM, SAY-
ING, THOU SHALT GO NO MORE OUT WITH US TO
BATTLE, THAT THOU QUENCH NOT THE LIGHT OF
ISRAEL.*

“**T**RULY light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.” This great source of light was early formed by the Creator’s hand. “He saw that it was good.” It has ever since been the beauty and the glory of its system. Its most extensive beneficence is as necessary, as its splendor is illustrious. It is essential to the gladness, the guidance, and the support of the various inhabitants of the globe. It is peculiarly the life and the beauty of the vegetative creation. By this the enamelled meads are dressed in their richest robes, “surpassing SOLOMON in all his glory.”

With great wisdom then and propriety, did the men of Israel use the delicate and strong figure of light,
to

to give an idea of the splendor and benignity of their ruling Sovereign. The two principal ideas contained in this metaphor, are beams to *guide*, and rays to *cheer*; or, guidance and comfort. When applied to a just and good thing, it signifies that he governs with *wisdom* and *righteousness*; and to the joy and *felicity* of his subjects. DAVID himself uses the same splendid figure, in the sense of the text. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of GOD; and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."

The men of Israel, wiser than many in this day, duly appreciated the blessings of good government, and highly tendered the precious life of their sovereign. They trembled at his personal danger. They boldly opposed his design of going to battle against his rebellious son, and prevented his exposure of himself. They answered with all the fervor of love, and the firmness of patriotism: "Thou shalt not go forth: For if we flee away, they will not care for us: Neither if half of us die, will they care for us: But thou art worth ten thousand of us." What noble sentiments are these! And what sterling worth! It was for a like cause, and on a similar occasion, that they spake the words of our text.

DAVID had wearied himself in battle, and spent his strength. A gigantic foe saw his advantage, and had nearly improved it, and taken his life. ABISHAI, one of his Generals, possessed of presence of mind, stepped in a moment between his prince and death; saved him from the hands of his huge antagonist, and gave the monster the fatal thrust. On that great occasion, "his men," with equal reason, "Sware to him," saying, "Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel." How happy is such a prince! How blessed is such a People! Could I do any thing, which should promote such happiness, I should surely be happy too. I suppose

I suppose I should do but little to this purpose, were I to spend time to prove that civil government is a necessary institution, evident from the nature and circumstances of mankind ; that it is agreeable to the will of the Supreme Ruler of the world ; and that it may be administered in such a manner as to be of very various and extensive benefit to society. There is, I conceive, as little reason to induce me to show the comparative excellencies and defects of the several forms of government, which different nations have adopted. By the help of all these, the union has formed constitutions, perhaps, the most excellent and eligible of any yet thought of. To offer to our Rulers of this State, with modesty, and yet with zeal, some plain directions for an happy administration of our public affairs, is the business before us ; with the resulting duties of the People.

If Rulers would be the light and joy of the People, it is essential that they bear a kind and parental *affection* to them. This is a principle animating and persevering, and essential to a joyful activity in duty. Civil Rulers are in a station exalted and important. The consequences of their conduct are of a very serious and weighty nature, deeply affecting the interests of the community ; while they are seeking the welfare of the People, affairs may come before them of a very perplexed and intricate nature, calling for their united wisdom, probity and patience. At the same time, their unwearied and laboring services may not receive from the People that approbation, which they merit. The best measures of their administration may be disapproved and blamed, and censured as wrong ; neither calculated, nor even designed for the public good.

Under these and similar circumstances, how necessary is that love of the People, which flows from a regard to God, and christian principles ! Here Rulers must rise above present considerations, and act agreeably to their stations, and as accountable to God. They must view themselves as the Fathers of the People appointed by
God,

God, and reason to take care of their interests, and promote their welfare; although they should prove unthankful children, perverted by ignorant men; or such as are restless, discontented and seditious. Knowing that they are "ministers of God for good" to the People, they must attend to that very thing. And a sincere aim to promote that, animated by benevolence, should never be neglected a moment. A desire to be useful, and bless mankind, should rule in the hearts of all; men possessing the station and influence of Rulers, should greatly cherish it. They cannot rule us in the fear of God without it.

But, animated by this, and guided by wisdom, they will shine in their influence, as the sun in the firmament; and enlighten and cheer all who have eyes to see, and sensibility to feel. And they may always hope this number will be large, notwithstanding all the jealous and uneasy men, who grow up spontaneously in free governments. Many will say of such Rulers, "They are the glory and stability of our times." Even in this day of jarring politics, we have Rulers of whom we say, "Ye are worth ten thousand of us." We have our NEHEMIAHS, for whom we pray, "LORD blot not out all their good deeds which they have done for thy people, and for the houses of our God." We have our MORDECAI's, who are "great in the nation, and accepted of the multitude of their brethren, seeking the wealth of the People, and speaking peace to all their seed." All Rulers should be like these, and become the light and gladness of the People.

Great knowledge of the nature and duties of government is another part of that genial light, by which Rulers shine, and give the People joy. This, with a connected and competent acquaintance with human nature, is essential, if they would rule with honor to themselves, and advantage to the People. Should the People see that they are ignorant, or neglectful, of the Constitution, and the principal rules of administration, they

they would view them as a luminary under an eclipse, shedding a tenebrious and portentous light. But, while they duly regard both these with a prudent reference to the genius and sentiments of the People, they will shine with a pleasing and acceptable splendor. For while they wisely and faithfully attend to that Constitution, which the united wisdom and care of the whole People have formed and chosen, and which is admirably adapted to the security and promotion of the general welfare, how can the People complain? How can they refuse either approbation, or gratitude? They must see, that such conduct secures their liberties and possessions; and in many ways renders the enjoyment of them greatly enhanced. Laws made by such Rulers, must be, not only constitutional, but wise and wholesome. They must be agreeable to all good citizens; and offensive only to "the lawless and disobedient," for whom they are especially needful. Such rulers will shine in their orbits with bright and cheering rays. They must see, in a thousand instances, which people in the mass overlook, such measures as will favour the general welfare. They must be supposed to know the most equitable and easy way of levying taxes, the most wise and necessary laws, the most worthy and suitable men for all civil offices, the most eligible ways of promoting discoveries and improvements in arts and sciences, and in the comforts and conveniencies of life; the most efficacious means of checking vice, and aiding virtue; and, in general, the best ways of promoting the public welfare. Such Rulers will be viewed by all the wise and good, as the Light and Happiness of the People. And if one among them could be found alone to wish the light quenched, that the blessings of anarchy might succeed, he alone would deserve to have his choice, and to "be filled with his own ways."

If Rulers would shine with a genial splendor, and give solid joy to the people, they must attend with much care to the *Laws* which they make to govern
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them. The basis of these should ever be justice and mercy. These virtues should always be encouraged, and the opposite vices checked. Rulers in their design "are not a terror to good works, but to evil." And no good and quiet man should be slavishly "afraid of the power;" but assured, that, "doing well he should have praise of the same." Justice is, perhaps, the brightest gem in the crown of a Ruler. He should ever be able to say, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: and my judgment was a robe and a diadem." This should be the robe of every Magistrate, in every department of government. For how can a People be happy when this is not the case? If iniquity be framed by law, what will become of the peace and felicity of the People? And if the course of justice be stopped among a People by the corruption or intimidation of the judicial powers, "where can the righteous seek redress?" And how can the guilty be made afraid? Justice is so essential to the welfare of communities!

It is in itself an exalted and divine virtue. In this we peculiarly resemble the Deity. Almost all other virtues have a reference to ourselves. This is generous and benevolent, extending to all mankind. God alone is just to perfection, and able to distribute it entire and without defect. His omniscience gives him the most complete view of all moral beings; and his almighty arm enables him to render to all according to their deeds.

The nearer Civil Rulers (who are gods below) approach to the Divine Model, the more truly are they the light of the People: And by a wise mixture of mercy and justice, in their administrations, they resemble the Deity in that ravishing glory which is seen "in the face of JESUS CHRIST." Let our laws partake of these heavenly ingredients; and let them be truly and faithfully executed. On these two pillars hang all the wealth and quietness of the People. At least they are
essential

essential to their virtue and happiness, their ease and tranquillity.

Sumptuary and economical laws might aid the cause of virtue, and so far as the powers of government reach that way, they will be well employed to check a rage for extravagant diversions and amusements of all kinds. These things are injurious to *young Republics*, and *Christian Republics*. I am aware the subject is delicate, and the spirit of the times backward to restraint; yet we venture to say, "A land of levity is a land of guilt." A People devoted to high-seasoned pleasures, and showy diversions, improved by the flowers of eloquence, are apt to form romantic ideas of happiness, to lose a relish for the solid duties and comforts of life, and to contract a growing distaste to the better pleasures of virtue, and the elevating hopes of religion. We are apt in this way to "seek a Heaven below the skies," and to neglect that which is above. The natural effect is, a carnal and worldly temper. To oppose the steps which lead to this, and to remove the temptations to it, are labours worthy of all Ministers, civil or sacred. Encouraging frugality, industry and temperance in pleasure, and opposing the opposite evils, Magistrates do well. In thus regarding justice and mercy, and seeking also the promotion of beneficial and virtuous habits of living, they will shine to approbation; and it will be the duty of the People to "lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty."

If Rulers would be the light of the People, they must attend closely to the *characters* of men whom they put into *authority*. Every man in office should be possessed of probity and firmness, and a friend to mankind and to righteousness. The laws of a country may be wise and good; yet, when the actions of men are tried by them, they may be twisted and perverted, so that the innocent shall suffer, and the guilty be acquitted. The laws shall have "a meaning never meant," owing to some vague expressions in the frame of them; or some
other

other handle will be made use of to the same purpose. Hence the importance of integrity in the judicial departments.

Men in office, designed to keep the peace of society, and promote justice and union among neighbours, may do eminent service, acting well, and keeping the end of their appointment in view. By advising parties to peace and friendship, and sometimes relaxing their fees, they may prevent much mischief, and promote much happiness. All "our officers should be peace, and our exactors righteousness;" that "our peace may be as a river." "Righteousness exalteth a nation." It tends to happiness, and procures the blessing of God, "which maketh rich." "When he giveth quietness who then can make trouble? And when he hideth his face who then can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only." Righteous men in office shine and allure to right conduct by their example. Under them government is beloved and honoured. Beside, when it is well known that government is just, and that unworthy men are excluded from posts of honour and profit, this very thing will be an incentive to a fair and good character. And men ever known to have been selfish, and never to have served the interests of society, will be afraid to be candidates for important offices. The idea of disappointment will check them; and they will dread to have their characters held up to public view, lest they should become doubly scandalous to them. This care to fill offices with worthy men, will then turn out greatly advantageous to the public: For good men also would as readily come forward, in this case, as the base would hide themselves.

In order to prove that the Deity is on the side of virtue, and that it will finally prevail, an eminent author has *supposed* a nation to be wholly righteous. The same, the nature and the government of this nation, are *imagined* to make it the greatest and the most happy nation on earth. One step, and an important one
towards

towards this singular felicity of a people, would be an exclusive introduction of worthy men into places of authority.

Sensible of this, even the unenlightened PHARAOH was wholly influenced by it in the choice of a very important officer. He said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" on which ROLLIN makes this good reflection: "In talking thus he entirely reformed a false policy, which considers virtue and religion as unserviceable in the government of a State, and finds an exact probity too great a check upon its views and projects. This stupid impiety is exposed to eternal shame by an infidel King. He is convinced that the more of the Spirit of God a Minister has, the more capable he is of governing a kingdom. And the least attention suffices to discover, that the opposite principle flows from the utter want of human understanding."

When therefore, in any government, the vilest men may rise, either by servility or secondary influence, we may say, there is a radical defect in administration. So far such a government is reduced to infamy and misery.

And as, in our happy country, the People possess the privilege of choosing their Rulers, in the first instance it is of mighty importance that they should have that knowledge and that virtue which will enable them to make a just and wise use of it. To this end the increase of virtue and general knowledge, is greatly to be desired and promoted. For what is a Free Republic, and what is it soon like to be, without its essential pillars? Even since the days of our independence, although a People never had greater privileges, or made more rapid strides in prosperity, it has cost the nation large sums to quell insurrections and rebellions. But, could these have risen, had the nation possessed a due share of knowledge and virtue? Let us all then exert ourselves

ourselves to promote these ; and let no man rise to posts of honour without them. For,

“ When impious men bear sway,

“ The post of honour is the private station.”

But this will not be the only misfortune of such men bearing sway. The body will receive detriment, and in more ways than one. The national interests will be neglected ; merit will be discouraged, and vile men will rejoice, and do mischief without fear.

As the light and support of the People, Rulers must defend them in their enjoyments, by keeping *peace* at home and abroad, as far as may be.

In this weighty business, I confess, more wisdom is required, than I have any claim to ; but that internal and external peace is a blessing of the first magnitude, and accordingly to be sought, no one will deny.

To secure it at *home*, and to promote all the blessings to which it is favourable, is the duty of Rulers ; and if these ends can be obtained by the wise and prudent conduct of government, it will be happy. And, in general, we may hope for this. But if unreasonable men will, notwithstanding, rise up against the government, and disturb the public peace, *force* is then justly resorted to.

To secure us from *foreign wars*, it is plainly the duty of Rulers to be just in their conduct towards the other nations with whom they have connexions. And if misunderstanding take place between us and any such nation, it seems truly just and wise, and a part of commendable policy, to try the event of upright and honorable negotiation. And the importance of preventing an open rupture with such a nation may be so great as to justify all the steps of an amicable and *persevering* negotiation. Such steps will vindicate our national character in the eyes of all nations ; bring down the blessing of God upon us ; fill the people with love to government, and animate them firmly to defend their

their country against the hostile attempts of such a nation, when negotiation shall have proved inefficient.

We rejoice and bless God, that the conduct of our Rulers, to keep peace at home and abroad, is the exact resemblance of all that we have said.

As the calamities of war are devoutly to be deprecated ; so we pray God, that the measures taken for our just defence may turn out, under a benign Providence, the prevention of them. And as this is the aim and good design of our Rulers ; so, I doubt not, they cordially approve of the spirit of that prayer which was offered by a great prince and warrior after a decisive battle :

“ Make wars, O LORD, by wars to cease ;
And let this conquest lead to peace.”

But should we, after all, be called to put the harness on, the *justice* of our cause would lead us to hope in that God who has ever been “ the hope of our Israel and the Saviour of it in times of trouble.”

I only add, rulers will be eminently the light of the people by aiding the cause and promotion of *learning, virtue and religion.*

These are so essential to the real and lasting welfare of the body, and have been so truly the glory of our country, that our civil heads cannot promote or esteem them to excess. To encourage, and still maintain, schools for youth, is, doubtless, one good means of answering these great purposes. And here we may also reckon the encouragement of useful *discoveries and inventions.* And if they can do any thing by authority or example, to bring into a more just esteem, a learned and pious *Christian Ministry*, the times too loudly call for it. People are sadly indifferent, in many places, or even averse to the settlement and improvement of such pastors. With large numbers, the peace, the order, the union and edification of the churches of CHRIST, are small things ; and the increase of infidelity, or vain and imported philosophy, on the
one

one hand, and of disorder in churches, and angry separations and delusions, on the other, calls aloud to our Zion. With me, these are the most portentous appearances of the day. If any men, or order of men, can be the happy instruments of promoting more light and love among Christians, they will be eminently honoured of God, and equally dear to the friends of CHRIST's peaceful kingdom.

Our *University*, which has given so many ornaments and blessings both to Church and State, will receive the fostering care of our Civil Fathers.

And as they profess the religion of CHRIST, we hope with the greater confidence, that they will esteem its heavenly doctrines, and observe its pure precepts, and be lovely examples of so divine a religion, in all their private deportment.

As *Rulers*, they will act for CHRIST, who has raised them to seats of dignity; and who possesses "all power in heaven and earth." As they can serve the community *so well* in no other way, as in honouring religion, this duty will be obvious to them. And as the works of *Providence*, in all ages, are designed to promote the Redeemer's kingdom and the salvation of souls, we all, and Rulers eminently, should concur in that best design.

And, as *Christians*, they may, perhaps, advance religion as much by their *private life and example*, as by bending all the power of their governmental stations that way. By firmly believing the inspiration of the sacred books, and defending it by its own standing and convincing evidence; by honouring and comforting the Ministers of CHRIST, many of whom want comfort; by attending public worship, and revering our holy Sabbaths; by manifesting the pure and the benevolent temper of the Gospel in their daily life; by promoting the peace, union and edification of the respective Churches to which they belong; and by discountenancing all loose principles and practices, and encouraging

encouraging things opposite, they may do much to aid the best cause in the world, and "to strengthen the things of religion which remain, and are ready to die." Behaving thus gloriously, they will be the light of our Israel, and remind us with joy of that better day of Zion, in which "Kings will be its nursing fathers, and Queens its nursing mothers," directing all their powers that way.

From this view of the duties of Rulers, however cursory and imperfect, we yet infer those of the People.

If our Rulers govern us in love and wisdom, by good laws, truly executed, and attend to our peace, and guard against the calamities of war; if they light the lamps of science, virtue and religion, and keep them burning, we should rejoice in their light, and say, "Blessed be you, and blessed be your fidelity, and blessed be God." Such a government is an eminent instrument to restrain the excesses of bad men, and to defend the good. If instances had never been given, who could form an *idea* of those crying enormities and transcendent cruelties, into which men would run, unrestrained by an efficient and just government? But were men, for any length of time, to "do what is right in their own eyes," we could surely *expect* "no peace to him that goeth out, or to him that cometh in." To restrain lawless men, and prevent the eruption of conceived mischief, is one grand design and happy effect of government. According to some men, and good judges too, this is a *principal* end of all civil authority. This is an engine in the hands of God, by which he prevents such a deluge of inhuman and ungodly deeds, as would otherwise make the world a more complete bedlam, than ever yet it has been. Now the righteous have *some* tranquillity; otherwise "their souls would be vexed from day to day by the conversation and deeds of the wicked." And they would, probably, be so distressed as to "rejoice exceedingly, and be glad to find the grave."

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How *thankful* then should we be for an efficient and just government ! And how much should we prize and honour the Light of our Israel, and pay *tribute* to government gladly ! For is not *that* the security, not only of our farms and merchandize, but of our liberty and lives ? And we should *obey* them from the united principles of interest and religion. The voice of inspiration to the People, even under infidel Rulers, is, " Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the LORD's sake : for so is the will of GOD, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." With what irresistible motives is this obedience pressed on us, whose Rulers are Christians, and whose " Nobles are of ourselves ; and whose Governor proceeds from the midst of us ;" and by our own glad choice too ! I am not surely pleading for " passive obedience and non-resistance ;" but for a rational and easy obedience to a government of our own, and Rulers of our own.

" But if our Rulers will not please us, and guide the political ship according to our *better* judgment, must we press our lips close, nor dare condemn a mal-administration ?" Let us *first* be sure this is the case ; and then use peaceful modes of obtaining *redress*. If need be, let us not again choose such Rulers. And, while we examine public measures with entire freedom, let us avoid all bad temper, and a desire to find fault. Let us shun that *jealousy*, which is a baneful excrescence of envy and discontent ; otherwise we may be hurried by a " trifle light as air" to censure the best measures of the best man ; whose wisdom, integrity and patriotism have been proved and honoured a thousand times. And let us not be " unstable as water," carried about by every wind of " seditious doctrine." Let us be candid and quiet till there is a cause of complaint. For, under government, have we not the most forcible call to this, and the best *means* of " leading quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty ?" SOL-

OMON'S

●MON'S advice was once good : " My son, fear the LORD and the King, and meddle not with those that are given to change."

It is surely our reproach, if we are ever ready to complain of government, and to fret under *every* duty, as if a strange and oppressive thing had happened to us. We have prospered, above other People, under a mild and equitable government ; and shall we be peevish and ever uneasy with it ? This is beneath the wisdom and magnanimity of free men. It is too much like fretful children, who cannot be pleased by all the tenderness of their too indulgent parents. At this time it peculiarly becomes us to be the friends of government, and the support of our Rulers. Let us not make their cares heavier, when the defence and happiness of our common country call for all their attention, and the most steady exertions. And, in the room of complaints and murmurs, let us bless God for good governments ; and that we may well *hope* we shall yet be continued free from oppression and despotism on the one hand ; and on the other, from the terrible effects of anarchy and unbounded licentiousness.

Indeed, we can hardly set bounds to our national *hopes*, if we will but honestly and generally seek the public weal, acting well in our several stations. No doubt there are real difficulties and obstructions in the way. But what nation was ever free from them ?

Let us mention some of the principal ones, and then see if we cannot raise an hopeful prospect of national happiness, notwithstanding.

Some persons are very jealous, that our Rulers will become *despotic* ; and that they are actually taking the previous steps. But will not these pains be removed as soon as they realize the checks and balances of our governments ; the circumstances of our Rulers as being the same with their own ; and the change and frequency of their elections ?

A spirit

A spirit of *licentiousness* and *anarchy*, so much spread among us, is another enemy to public happiness. But was not this to be expected, for a time, in such a nation as this, and in our circumstances? Having dearly bought our liberty, and possessed the precious boon, it was natural to expect, that many would run wild with the idea, and not suddenly distinguish between governmental liberty, and licentiousness. But are we not coming to our senses, and regarding this distinction more and more? And as we grow cool, and increase in knowledge, and experience the blessings of good government, shall we not soon, and generally, drop this abuse of liberty, and be willing to be happy? Let all good patriots and intelligent men teach their connexions this wisdom, and join in advancing political information and solid virtue. Thus, we may hope, the People will see their real interests, and avoid a restless and seditious spirit, which is its own tormentor.

The *abuse of religious liberty*, it is granted, is another obstruction of public prosperity. This liberty is a precious part of our singular privileges. It should be employed to promote love and good works: These are its sweet effects, when guided by wisdom and piety. But when it is made "an occasion to the flesh," an instrument of mischief, it becomes an engine fatal to the best pleasures and blessings of society. Has it not thus opened a door to infidelity, and the corruption of Christian doctrines, worship and manners? It is believed to have led the way to injurious divisions and angry separations among Christians, and much enthusiasm. By these means the peace and edification of Churches have been greatly injured; and many places have probably been thus retarded in their desires and pursuits of stated and faithful pastors.

I desire not that men should be deprived of the right of private judgment in religion. I would not wound the feelings of pious persons, however weak and misled; but it is grievous to wise Christians, to see souls turned

turned from the truth to fables ; from the simplicity that is in CHRIST, to human fancies ; from pure inspiration, to its fatal counterfeit.

But has not this evil always taken place in times of civil commotions and revolutions ? And, may we not hope, that time and consideration will remove it ? We have the happiest means of knowing true religion from all its counterfeits. We have colleges, academies and schools, designed to promote general information and religious science. We have many excellent teachers in the Christian Ministry, workmen who need not to be ashamed. Under such eminent means of instruction, let us cheerfully hope the time will soon come when seducers and novices in divinity shall be easily discovered and discarded ; when the peace of the Churches shall be prized and maintained ; and the solid virtue and piety of *Holy Writ* be preferred to superstition and enthusiasm. Let us all duly esteem and improve a learned, faithful and pious Ministry ; and acquaint ourselves fully with the scriptural marks and arts of seducers, and avoid them. Let great care be taken in the introduction of men into the Gospel Ministry ; and let the peace and order of the Churches be sacredly regarded, and such as would break them be shunned. And who can tell how soon the abuse of religious liberty, with all its ruinous effects, shall give way to the increase of love and peace, regularity and holiness ?

We have also too much reason to believe, *foreign intrigue* has done much to divide us as a nation, and obstruct the public weal. We have, indeed, great reason to believe, that this has been a capital machine, employed against our peace ; a principal wedge, driven with strong and repeated blows, to split us into pieces, to the ruin of our happy Union. An excellent and patriotic writer of our own has made this matter plain ; “ The blessings of good government,” says he, “ have been most imminently and immediately endangered

dangered by *foreign intrigue*. From this source have arisen our greatest perils. This bane of our independence, peace and prosperity, has been operating in various ways for more than twenty years past, in insidious efforts to diminish our national limits, importance and resources; in keeping alive national prejudices; in attempts to prevent our having an efficient government; in artful stratagems to diminish and weaken the powers vested in the Executive; to destroy the *checks and balances*, and to consolidate the distinct and well-defined powers of the Three Branches established in the Constitution; in frequent interferences in the management of our national concerns; in fomenting divisions among us; and in patronizing and circulating publications, calculated to cherish and increase them; by calumniating our Rulers, misrepresenting their measures, and exciting murmurs, prejudices, and open and direct opposition against the laws. In these, and many other ways, too numerous to detail, has foreign intrigue discovered itself among us, and attempted to check our national growth, and to deprive us of the blessings of a free and independent government.

It was by intrigues and artifices, like those we have mentioned, that all the Republics of *Europe* have been prostrated at the feet of *France*. It was in the same way that the free States of *Greece* were ruined, and their liberty lost.* Let us bless God for this discovery; and be thankful that all our opposition to government, and a fatal spirit of disorganization, are not the spontaneous growth of the *American soil*. It was through art and deception, and not from native corruption, that many, otherwise good, citizens among us have done wrong, and injured their country. When the growing light shall bless their heads, it will be seen that their hearts have not erred.

Gratitude is an amiable virtue; but when we see with open eyes, that it has been ignorantly directed to
a foreign

* DOCTOR MORSE.

a foreign nation, we shall exchange it for *justice* to ourselves. Converts, of this happy sort, are daily made; and, for the honour of *America*, we will hope and believe, their number will be enlarged; and that our union, patriotism and firmness will render our name excellent in the earth.

We only add; a *spirit of infidelity, immorality and ungodliness*, spreading among us, is another obstruction of the public welfare, and an enemy to it. But, for our comfort, we say, neither is this of our *own soil*, but a foreign production. The laborious and critical author, before cited, hath said, "The Philosophists and Revolutionists of *France* appear to have acted upon the maxim of THOMAS PAINE, 'that an army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot. It is neither the Rhine (he says) the Channel, nor the *Ocean*, that can arrest its progress. It will march to the horizon of the world, and it will conquer.' In conformity to this maxim, that infamous book, styled, *The Age of Reason*, was written in France (and, it is said, in the house and under the patronage of Mr. MUNROE) printed there in the *English* language, and a cargo of 15,000 copies, at one time, sent into these *United States*, and disposed of by sale at a cheap rate, or given away. Besides these imported copies, numerous editions of the same work (shame on our country!) have been printed here. The effects produced by the extensive circulation of these books, and others of the same cast and tendency, in the evident spread of infidel and atheistical principles, and the consequent deterioration of morals, evince that these Apostles of *Illuminatism* have not been unsuccessful in their labours."

It thus appears, we must allow, that *we were too ready* to receive the fatal plant, and to cherish it. But will a People, always used to reverence the God of Heaven, and among whom many pious souls remain, long be guilty of this madness? Rather let us hope, that,

that, in an exchange of circumstances, we shall, through grace, come to ourselves ; honour the God of our Fathers ; and confess, with deep contrition, that we have erred, and played the fool exceedingly.

These are our diseases. Let us hope, through God, they are curable ; lest we mourn, in accents of untried sorrow, " Is there no balm in *Gilead* ? No Physician there ? Why then is not the health of the People recovered ? "

We will spend a few moments, however, in viewing the brighter side of our prospects ; that we may raise our hopes still higher of the nation's prosperity.

The *Providences of God* to our Fathers, and to us, have been favourable, next to a miracle. Within our remembrance, he hath done great things for us ; for which we should be glad, and offer due praise. Our revolution turned up events so truly gracious, that the blind see, and the inconsiderate adore the hand of Him " who works in all, yet who alone seems not to work." And since that day his blessings have descended in showers. If I be not deceived, never was there before a People so numerous and so well-informed as this, who had entire leisure and full opportunity, and the most happy means of forming Constitutions of Government for themselves, and then of receiving them, after the most mature deliberation. And our happiness, under their administration, has surpassed even our own sanguine expectations. And this has been the case, notwithstanding the many and peculiar embarrassments which have attended said administration. Never, it seems, was there before a young Republic so exceedingly harrassed in the management of its affairs. Eternal honour to our firm and patriotic Rulers, who have borne the burden and heat of the day. Some, better informed than myself, think their vigorous and firm measures have saved the *Constitution* itself from shipwreck ! If so, what thanks are due to them, and to God ! And what joyful hopes arise from hence, of our future felicity !

Blessed

Blessed be GOD, *our present circumstances are so good and promising!* Hitherto hath the LORD saved us, in the midst of great and pressing trials. We hope he will yet save us. While the State Governments, so generally, move happily in their respective stations, the Federal one, like the sun in the centre of its system, gives light and strength, union and stability to them all. And the nation appears to be emerging from the darkness of trouble to the light of joy and independent felicity. A spirit of patriotism and zeal for government, have become general. A sense of the public weal, as depending on *ourselves*, and not on any *other nation*, has nobly spread and honoured the union. The firm and truly *American* spirit of this great Commonwealth, is a joyful consideration. And the preservation of the life, and eminent usefulness of the PRESIDENT of the Union, and the appearance of a WASHINGTON once more at the head of our army, are matters of profound gratitude to JEHOVAH, and of high joy and hope to us. Being myself an American, and loving the happiness and honour of my country, I cannot easily omit, in this place, an eulogy, laconic and transcendant, said to have been pronounced by a foreigner on these two great Personages of *America*. A gentleman said to his friend, with much seriousness, "Do you believe there is a man on earth really possessed of all those excellencies which are ascribed to *President WASHINGTON*?" "I never did till I saw *JOHN ADAMS*."

These, and similar facts, justly raise our hopes of national felicity, and waft our thoughts forward on the wings of delightful anticipation. Many things, to the same purpose, might be added; we might enlarge on the situation, richness and resources of this favoured country; the vigour and firmness with which our means of defence have been adopted, and the success crowning them &c. but I dare presume no further on the patience of this honoured assembly.

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Let

Let us then, in our several spheres, be animated in our duty. Let the People study to be quiet, and to do their own business; fear God, and honour Government, and meddle not with them who are given to change. Let our Rulers prove themselves the light of our Israel. Let these, and the Ministers of Religion, act in sweet agreement; let them look on each other with a benevolent eye, not mixing their powers and their interests with unjust or oppressive views; but imbibing a spirit of love and esteem mutually; and aiding each other in the great and godlike design of making an happy nation. So will the LORD fulfil all our desires, leading his chosen people by the hands of MOSES and AARON.

If any thing has been delivered, unfuitable to this important and joyful occasion, or injurious to the public weal, the candour of this intelligent audience will cover it. And may GOD bless a sincere endeavour to serve my country, to fulfil my duty, and to aid the Redeemer's cause, so generally and so unhappily neglected.

Your Excellency will accept of our congratulations on the repeated suffrages of your country, by which you are again the first light of this part of our Israel. To pay you, Sir, an unmeaning or painful compliment, I am not willing. But to rejoice in a man beloved and approved in so exalted a station, and whom an intelligent People have so often called to the Chief Seat of Government, is both my pleasant duty and gratified ambition.

It is our sweet hope, that you will still attend faithfully, with advice of *Council*, to the defence, and happiness of your country. *Their* wisdom and firmness, we trust, will be a seasonable aid to your Excellency. Your own judgment will naturally be confirmed by *their's*, enabling you to act with fuller satisfaction, and more animating hopes. That modesty which attends
merit

merit will gladly receive concurring advice. And thus acting, you will do honour to yourself, and verify the remark of SOLOMON: "The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools."

We presume not to instruct your Excellency; but it is agreeable to our subject to say, you will tenderly love the People; pay a sacred regard to the Constitution in your conduct; see that governmental proceedings are guided by wisdom and justice; regard merit in placing men in office; seek the peace of the nation; and aid the progress of learning, virtue and religion. You will attend, Sir, to the removal of the cruel obstructions, which are thrown in the way of the public welfare; and as readily improve the seasons and means of advancing the proper and direct happiness of the body. Your urbanity and moral virtues will eminently serve the general cause; as the manners of the great descend to the lower grades of men, and are caught with avidity. And as "a Christian is the highest style of man," you, Sir, will shine with redoubled lustre, having sincerely joined that to "His Excellency." With this mingled glory, Sir, we pray, that you may long be a light and a blessing on earth; and finally shine, as the sun in the firmament, and as a star for ever and ever.

The Two Branches of the General Court receive our respect, and our cordial wishes for them, as men, and as Rulers. That part of them, who have long served their country, and honoured their stations, deserve our thanks; as they receive the approbation of their constituents in a light the most unequivocal in their repeated elections. May the elections of the day be attended to with that deliberation, wisdom and regard to merit, which the importance of the matter demands. As affairs of great moment may come before you in the course of the year, we pray GOD to give you that knowledge

knowledge, integrity and firmness, which will render you equal to them. And as real worth is proved in arduous and trying services, and shines the more, we trust you will be prepared to manifest that worth, should the trial come. The post of honour is often the post of danger. Let your genuine patriotism, and your resolution in duty, make you equal to every trial.

Be united in your *love* of the country, that, with the more ease you may be united also in the *means* of its preservation and happiness. Put on candour and patience in your deliberations; and let no partial views bias your judgments, or corrupt your affections. And let me say, with the fairest intention, and with all due respect, "Take heed, Honoured Fathers, that ye fall not out by the way." "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." You will do all in your power to prevent such ruin.

The times are difficult. A good old Minister of this country in such a day, made this caution the ground of a public discourse: "When we do not know what to do, we should be careful not to do we know not what." Your knowledge and prudence, I hope, will save you always from such rashness. Many causes, and some of them forcible, have perplexed and divided the minds of good citizens in their ideas of government and politics. It will be your duty and honour to see through those things which grieve and divide others; and by a conduct uniformly wise, constitutional and benevolent, to open their eyes; and thus to convince them also, that our government and administration are, as they ought to be, eminently for the good of the People; and that there is a mighty difference between government, and no government; between a good one, and a corrupt one; and between their real friends, and insidious foes. By such a conduct may you greatly serve the State.

And

And may this government, and every State government so concur with a wise, firm and righteous administration of the Federal Government, as that the Union shall be safely guided through its present sea of perplexity and fear, to the haven of entire peace with itself. And may this internal peace be accompanied with peace abroad, and not disturbed with foreign wars or foreign politics. And we also pray, that, on their own account, all the nations of *Europe* may be guided to an equitable and lasting peace; in which the peace of Zion, and the welfare of mankind may also be great and lasting. In all your efforts to shine, and be useful in your high stations, may God guide you by unerring wisdom, and crown them with the desired success. And all the people who are wise and good, will receive your services with gratitude; and, for your sakes, as well as their own, they will pray, that the light of Israel may not be quenched. May you all be faithful in a few things, and finally be made Rulers over many things, and be welcomed to your Great Master's joy.

A principle of piety is so essential to the discharge of all relative duties, as well as all others, that I shall be justified in closing this discourse by an inculcation of it.

Men and Brethren, whether Rulers or ruled, we have all a part to act in this short life, of importance, beyond all conception great. A future and an eternal scene awaits us; full of joy and glory on the one hand, and of shame and contempt on the other. We shall escape the latter and obtain the former, if the grace which bringeth salvation teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the present world. Thus serving God, and our generation by the will of God, we shall receive the end of our course, the *salvation* of our souls.

The worth of *this* is learned by *one* consideration, taken by itself, without addition. The Ministers, whom

whom God hath provided for human happiness, and for *this* eminently, afford this instruction. The great *REDEEMER* came into the world as our servant ; “ not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” The *Angels* of Heaven are sent forth to “ minister to the heirs of salvation.” *Christian Rulers*, are “ ministers of GOD to us for good.” The *Ministers of the Gospel* are, in a peculiar sense, “ our servants for JESUS’ sake.” They are the gift of our ascended Head, appointed and continued “ for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the Ministry, and the edifying of the body of CHRIST, till we come to the stature of perfect men.” To render this Ministry thus glorious and successful, the *HOLY SPIRIT* is also sent into the world. In this view he is, in the highest sense, a Minister of GOD for our good. And as all Heaven is for us, rejoicing at the repentance and salvation of one sinner : So all Hell is against us, the prince of it, with his legions, walking about, seeking whom he may devour.

If such be the combat, and such the combatants, what must the *prize* of the warfare be ! *Is our salvation of such amazing import ?* Then let us so esteem it ! Let us adore the GOD who has made the wonderful provision for it.

What a creature is man, for whom the GOD of Heaven hath done so much ! I do not know that we can think too highly of ourselves, even in the depths of our humility, for our crimes.

Of human *nature* ne’er too high
Are our ideas wrought ;
Of human *merit* ne’er too low
Depress’d the daring thought.”

Can we act agreeably to the dignity of this nature, and our future prospects, unless we become the willing followers of CHRIST, the Light of our world, and the Saviour

Saviour of our souls? May his healing word dwell in us richly, and guide us in our duty to God, to society, and to ourselves, and make us harmless and blameless, the children of God, without rebuke, shining as lights in the world. Then, with the assurance of hope, we may long for that day, in which the righteous shall shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father.

To that blessedness and glory may we all at last be brought, through JESUS CHRIST, our Divine Redeemer.



at first I was
glad to see
and I was
as you see
to the
and I was
and I was
and I was
and I was

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